

IF A DREAM.

When a skeptic tried to convince Addison, the great English essayist, that the Christian religion was a delusion, "the baseless fabric of a vision," his reply was, "No matter. Call it a dream, if you will. But don't wake me up. Let me cherish the sweet delusion, since it makes me both a happier and a better man." This is the answer of every true believer to whoever assails his faith in Christ. It is the answer of the Church to the skeptic and the scoffer. Our religion, call it what you will, is a great blessing to us and to the world. It is the only source of happiness and hope to hundreds of millions. Take Christianity out of the world, and life would not be worth living, and death would be a leap in the dark.

I do not care to discuss the historical evidences of the truth of our holy religion. I am satisfied to point all honest inquirers to its influence upon individuals and society. A system so beneficent, associated with the noblest specimens of manhood and womanhood, and with the best progress of the race, cannot be a delusion and a dream. It must have a firm foundation in the purpose and the providence of God.

When the sun rises, scattering darkness, bringing warmth as well as light and beauty, making the seed germinate, painting the blossom and ripening the fruit, do I need to prove his existence even to one born blind? Though he cannot see, yet he can feel, and, adding his own experiences to the testimony of others, he does not doubt the sun. And the most sin-blinded skeptic has no excuse to-day for not believing that Christ is the Sun of righteousness, that he is the light of the world.—*Herald and Presbyterian*.

A GOOD PATTERN.

Many years ago a lad went into a printing-office to learn to set type. He looked about the office and kept his eyes open, and saw one man whose type on the galley seemed to stretch away down very rapidly into long columns; and he begged the privilege of working by that man's side, and learn of him how to set type.

Much depends on the pattern or example which a young man has set for

him, or the person he chooses as his pattern. If he selects one who is idle, careless, and who allows everything to go slipshod and at loose ends, he will naturally imitate his pattern in these undesirable traits; while if he selects a guide who is prompt, diligent, systematic, and business like, he will be quite sure to resemble him in some of these particulars.

"He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Whoever allows himself to be led by blind, and ignorant, and incompetent leaders, will reap the reward of his folly in the misleading which he is sure to suffer.

There are men who never could do business themselves, but who seem to think that they are competent to manage all creation besides. There are persons who never could rule their own houses, who yet are bound to rule or ruin the church of God. There are men who have lived in chronic poverty all their days who seem to think they know how to better the condition of all who will pay heed to their words.

The man who mends the world most effectually begins with himself. The man who manages his own affairs most wisely, is best fitted to manage the affairs of others. "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men."—*Common People*.

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING.

God blesses you that you may be a blessing to others. Then He blesses you a second time in being a blessing to others. It is the talent that is used that multiplies. Receiving, unless one gives in turn, makes one full and proud and selfish. Give out the best of your life in the Master's name for the good of others. Lend a hand to every one who needs. Be ready to serve at any cost those who require your service. Seek to be a blessing to every one who comes for but a moment under your influence. This is to be angel-like. It is to be God-like. It is to be Christ-like. We are in this world to be useful. God wants to pass His gifts and blessings through us to others. When we fail as His messengers, we fail of our mission.—*J. R. Miller*.

AN END OF SORROWS.

God has promised that a period shall be put to the reign of sorrow: "God will wipe away tears from off all faces." Isa. xxv. 8. Can we not wipe away our own tears? Never. If any man dry his own tears, he shall weep again; but if God dry our tears, our eyes shall never lose the light. It all comes, therefore, to a consideration of this solemn question: What shall put an end to this sorrow? Shall we by frivolity drown our sorrows? Shall we banish our griefs by pre-engaging our memory with things that die in their using? Or shall we say: Thou living God of all joy, thou only canst put an end to human woe; make my heart glad, and then my face will shine; take the guilt away from my conscience and my nature, and then my tears will cease to flow! This is interior work; this is a spiritual miracle; this belongs to the reign of God and the ministry of grace. We resign ourselves, not passively and murmuringly, but actively and thankfully to God, that he may make us glad with his own joy. The Lord awaits our consent to the drying of our tears.—*Joseph Parker*.

INCONSISTENT PRAYERS.

I thought, after listening to a prayer offered in behalf of our country, its present deplorable condition, praying God to give us men to make our laws, that we, Christians, may worship under our own vine and fig tree, none daring to molest us or make us afraid, if the Lord had said, "Give a good man from your congregation, Elder," that is the kind of material I am in need of under existing circumstances. "No sir, a man cannot hold office and fellowship us." How selfish, how inconsistent to pray for something you would not support. A man with such a principal should never make a display of praying for the laws of his country; he is not worthy of vine nor fig tree and he ought to be afraid all his life.

CLARA FLORA.

LAST WORDS OF DYING SAINTS.

Sir James Mackintosh: "I believe in Jesus."

Mr. Phelps: "It is delightful to stand on the banks."

Henry Townley: "My body is full of pain, but my soul is full of glory."

John Rock: "I am quite happy, but soon will be happier. 'I will be with Jesus in glory.'"

Teignmouth: "I have no hope but in Christ Jesus, in His sacrifice, in His blood, in His righteousness."